

WPHS College and Career Center Updates

December 2023

COLLEGE & CAREER CENTER:

Congratulations to every student, family, and staff member for making it (almost) to the end of 2023! It's a major milestone that deserves both acknowledgement and celebration!!!

As we move forward into 2024, remember that the CCC is opened Monday – Friday from 8 am – 4 pm. I am available to meet with students and parents virtually or by phone to assist students as they explore and make decisions about post-secondary opportunities. Please send an email to Mrs. Young at **kbyoung1@fcps.edu** if interested in scheduling a time to meet. I can also be reached via phone at 703-718-2548.

Students and families who are interested in additional places to access information and resources communicated from the Career Center, please visit the College & Career Center folders in Schoology. Go to Schoology/Courses/Student Services/College & Career Center folders. Also, if you are on social media, make sure to follow the Career Center for the latest updates on Twitter @wphsccc and on Instagram @westpoccc.

I hope that your winter break is full of good memories with family and friends. Wishing you a Happy New Year & I look forward to supporting our Wolverine students and families in 2024!

Highlight of Upcoming Events:

Below is a list of upcoming events. Details regarding each event can be found in this newsletter.

1/3 & 1/19: Northern VA Community College (NOVA) Accommodations & Accessibility Event

1/11: WPHS NOVA Application Completion Event

1/19: WPHS NOVA Application Completion Event

1/23: WPHS FAFSA/VASA Completion Event

1/23: Northern VA Community College (NOVA) Virtual Info Session

1/30: WPHS NOVA Application Completion Event

1/30: 2024 FCPS Gap Year Fair

2/20: Northern VA Community College (NOVA) Virtual Info Session (Spanish Session)

Multiple Dates: FCPS ACE Apprenticeship 101 Classes

NEW RESOURCE: Level Up Virginia Website Launched!

Virginians have a new tool to help them plan for their education after high school with a new website launched by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV). The *Level Up Virginia* website provides information on educational options such as certificate programs, apprenticeships, the military, trade schools, two-year and four-year colleges, and universities. In addition, the website offers tips for adult learners, students with disabilities, first-generation students, and English language learners.

SCHEV has worked with high school counselors, students, and college access experts to ensure that the website meets the unique needs of Virginians. This statewide initiative with VDOE aims to increase postsecondary readiness, enrollment, and completion for all students in the Commonwealth. The website can be found at <https://www.levelupvirginia.org/>

COLLEGE INFORMATION:

Fall was a very busy season in the CCC! College representatives from 98 colleges and universities visited WPHS between mid-September and early November this year and 1,076 seniors and juniors attended these visits. Students learned about different types of colleges from across the United States and what each has to offer prospective students. Some of the schools who visited included Yale, Dartmouth, Vassar, Purdue, Syracuse, Wake Forest, Vanderbilt, Georgia, Husson, Elon, Morgan, Berklee College of Music, SCAD, Champlain, and Iowa. Virginia schools were also well represented. Some of the visits included UVA, VA Tech, William & Mary, JMU, ODU, VCU, George Mason, Christopher Newport, University of Richmond, Randolph, Bridgewater & Northern Virginia Community College.

Seniors were also able to participate in “On-site Admissions Day in the Career Center”. Representatives from Radford University and Mary Baldwin University provided on-site admissions decisions to seniors who pre-registered and completed their applications.

Updates in College Admissions:

Several Virginia colleges and universities have new initiatives to support students & their families throughout the college application process. The requirements vary by college. Additionally, there are certain majors and/or honor programs that have different admissions requirements. Students should go to the university website or contact the admissions office for answers to questions not available on the websites.

1. Radford University will offer direct admission to prospective incoming freshmen and transfer students who meet the outlined criteria. Applicants will automatically be offered admission without committee review. For incoming freshmen some of the criteria includes a minimum weighted GPA of 3.3, passing grade in Algebra 2 and a completed/submitted application. For additional criteria and information: <https://www.radford.edu/content/radfordcore/home/news/releases/2023/october/direct-admission.html>
2. Virginia Commonwealth University guarantees admission to first year applicants who have a high school GPA of 3.5. Please note that guaranteed admission does not include the Schools of Engineering and Art. For additional information: <https://admissions.vcu.edu/apply-to-vcu/undergraduate/guaranteed-university-admission/>
3. Richard Bland College is our only junior college in Virginia. Students who complete their associate's degree have several program transfer options to a 4-year college or university. For additional details: <https://www.rbc.edu/academics/rbc-university-center/>

UPCOMING EVENTS:

2024 FCPS Gap Year Fair:

The FCPS School Counseling Services Office and Go Overseas are co-hosting the annual FCPS Gap Year Fair on Tuesday, January 30, 2024, at George C. Marshall High School from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. This event is for high school students and parents who are interested in learning more about the growing array of gap year opportunities. The evening will begin with a presentation in the auditorium from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Immediately following, the program fair will be held in the cafeteria from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., with representatives from over 30 programs offering gap year opportunities. Students and their families are encouraged to meet the representatives and learn about the variety of experiences available.

Students are encouraged to pre-register for this event. For more information, visit: USA Gap Year Fairs at <https://www.gooverseas.com/gap-year/usa-fairs> or FCPS Gap Year Fair at <https://www.fcps.edu/event/fairfax-county-public-schools-annual-gap-year-fair> .

**In the event of inclement weather on Tuesday, January 30, 2024. The Gap Year Fair will be held on Thursday, February 1, 2024, at the same time and location.

Apprenticeship 101:

FCPS Adult & Community Education (ACE) offers this program which prepares students for ACE apprenticeship classes in Electrical, HVAC and Plumbing as well as entry-level positions on project sites. Students learn the basics in safety, hand and power tools, construction math, material handling, construction drawings and employability skills. Participants can also earn an industry-recognized credential through the NCCER Registry System. The discounted tuition fee is \$197 (not including the \$35 textbook fee & \$5 lab fee). There are two upcoming sessions.

The *Winter Session* will be held at Woodson High School (9525 Main Street, Fairfax, VA) from 2/5/24 – 5/29/24. Sessions will be Monday & Wednesday from 6 pm -9 pm.

The Summer session will be held at Bryant High School (2709 Popkins Lane, Alexandria, VA) from 6/28/24 – 7/12/24. Sessions will be Monday thru Friday from 8 am – 3 pm.

For more information about this opportunity, contact educationalcounseling@fcps.edu . Additional information on apprenticeship classes can be found at <https://aceclasses.fcps.edu/default.aspx>

Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) Events:

There are a variety of upcoming NOVA events. Please note the location/time of each event.

Accommodations & Accessibility Event: On January 3rd & January 10th, NOVA will offer a virtual New Student Information Orientation for students who are interested in learning more about accommodations, the importance of self-advocacy, and NOVA resources. This virtual event will be held from 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm.

Go to <https://calendar.nvcc.edu/> to register at least 2 days in advance. If you require accommodations to attend this event or have any questions, send your request at least one week in advance to Pamela Lucas at plucas@nvcc.edu .

Virtual Information Sessions: Northern VA Community College will host virtual sessions to give an opportunity for FCPS seniors and their families to learn about the numerous opportunities, services & resources offered. See the [flyer](#) for additional details, dates & registration links.

- January 23, 2024 (4:30pm)
- February 20, 2024 (7:00pm) (Spanish Session)
- March 19, 2024 (4:30pm)

NOVA Application Workshops: The NOVA application for the Fall, 2024 semester is open! Seniors can complete their applications at <https://www.nvcc.edu/admissions/apply/> .

Seniors who have questions or need additional assistance in completing their application should mark their calendars & register for one of the West Potomac High School *NOVA Application Completion Sessions*. All of the sessions will be held in the College & Career Center. Seniors will need to bring their computer, social security number or permanent residence number (if available), & questions. Students must also have a personal email account.

Seniors **ONLY** can sign up for this event via *Naviance/Colleges/College Rep Visits*. Registration **is** required. If attending one of the sessions held during the school day, seniors must speak with their Advisory teacher prior to the application session.

Application Session 1

Date/Time: 1/11/2024 from 3:00 pm – 4:15 pm

Application Session 2

Date/Time: 1/19/2024 from 10:00 am – 11:10 am

Application Session 3

Date/Time: 1/30/2024 from 10:00 am – 11:10 am

FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION:

ALL college bound seniors are strongly encouraged to complete their financial aid application to be considered for federal, state and/or college specific financial aid.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Update:

The FAFSA usually opens on October 1st; however, the opening date for the FAFSA has been delayed this year. The Office of Federal Student Aid has announced that the 2024-2025 FAFSA will open by December 31, 2023.

What does this mean for seniors & families when it comes to completing the FAFSA?

- Colleges & universities will be using 12/31 as the opening date for FAFSA.
- The date that FAFSA opens is not the financial aid deadline. Check individual college websites for each school's financial aid deadline.

- Because this is a new version of the application, financial aid experts are suggesting that families wait a few days before accessing the form, as there may be some ‘bugs’ for the federal government to work out.
- In addition, financial aid experts are communicating that a student’s FAFSA data will be sent from the federal government to colleges in late January/early February, so there is no disadvantage to waiting a week or two.

What can a senior and parent(s) do now to prepare for FAFSA’s opening?

- Create your FSA ID (FAFSA username and password). Both the student and parent/guardian will each need a FSA ID.
- Families with multiple students in college: Like the college application process where each student has their own application, each student in a family has their own financial aid application & will need an individual FSA ID to complete it.
- If a parent/guardian has a FSA ID from an older child, you do not need to create another. While student’s need individual FSA ID’s, parents use the same FSA ID for multiple children.
- Go to <https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch> to create an account.
- There is a 3–5 day processing time for your account to activate. You do not have to wait until December 31 to create your FSA ID.

Virginia Application for Student Aid (VASA):

The VASA is used by Virginians who are nonimmigrants, undocumented, have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status or are otherwise ineligible to file the FAFSA and would like to be considered for state financial aid. Students who are unable to complete the FAFSA can use the VASA to access financial aid from Virginia.

- The VASA is scheduled to open sometime in January 2024.
- Students and families can visit the website if you are not sure which financial aid application to complete as well as to access the VASA once it opens.
- Go to <https://www.schev.edu/financial-aid/financial-aid/federal-state-financial-aid/vasa>

College Access Fairfax (CAF):

College Access Fairfax is a free resource for FCPS students and families and available to answer questions about the financial aid process. Please visit their website <https://collegeaccessfairfax.org/> to see a full description and details of all the services they offer, including scholarships available to FCPS students and videos of previous workshop presentations.

Mrs. Rowsey is our CAF Financial Aid Champion. She is in the Career Center once a week to assist students. If help is needed, seniors can come into the Career Center during all lunches to ask questions and get assistance creating their FSA ID. Students will need to bring their computer and social security number. Appointments are not needed...just stop by!

THURSDAY	1/4
THURSDAY	1/11
FRIDAY	1/19
MONDAY	1/22
THURSDAY	2/1
THURSDAY	2/8
THURSDAY	2/15
THURSDAY	2/22
THURSDAY	2/29
THURSDAY	3/7
THURSDAY	3/21

Additionally, Mrs. Rowsey will be available to meet virtually to help students and parents complete the FAFSA or VASA once each application opens. Ms. Rowsey can be contacted at khrowsey@fcps.edu if you have a question or to schedule an appointment.

Please note that Mrs. Rowsey will be attending the FAFSA/VASA completion events across the county and her availability for individual meetings may be limited during the month of January. If assistance in completing your financial aid application is needed, students and parents are encouraged to attend a school event. See specific information below.

UPCOMING FINANCIAL AID EVENTS:

WPHS FAFSA or VASA Completion Workshop on 1/23:

College Access Fairfax will host a FAFSA/ VASA completion workshop at the West Potomac High School Library on January 23rd from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm. It is being offered to seniors and parents/guardians of seniors who may need assistance in completing the student's 2024-2025 FAFSA or VASA application. Registration is not required for this event.

What will be needed to complete the entire FAFSA at this event:

- Create an FSA ID (your FAFSA username and password) at least one week before the event.
- Both the senior AND parent/guardian should attend together.
- Students MUST bring their FCPS laptop. (Personal laptops cannot connect to the FCPS Wi-Fi at the school)
- Needed Documents:
 - 2022 Tax Forms & wage statements (W-2, etc.)
 - Social security number for parents & students (or permanent resident number)
 - An FSA ID for both the student & one parent
 - Alien registration card (if not a U.S. citizen)
 - Date of birth of students & parents
 - Parents' date of marriage (and divorce, if applicable)
 - Date you moved to Virginia
 - Drivers license (if you have one)
 - Current statements for checking, savings, & other asset accounts
 - Current investment records, including 529 plans or other prepaid college plans
 - Military Families: LES (student and/or parents) for any month in 2022

Unable to make it to West Potomac's event? Sessions will be offered on:

- January 9, 2024 at Annandale HS from 6:00 - 8:00 PM
- January 11, 2024 at Mount Vernon HS from 5:30 - 7:30 PM
- January 16, 2024 at Lake Braddock SS from 6:00 - 8:00 PM
- January 20, 2024 at Justice HS from 10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
- January 22, 2024 at Chantilly HS from 7:00 - 9:00 PM
- January 23, 2024 at West Potomac HS from 6:00 - 8:00 PM
- January 24, 2024 at West Springfield HS from 7:00 - 9:00 PM
- January 25, 2024 at Hayfield SS from 5:00 - 7:00 PM
- January 27, 2024 at Edison HS from 10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon

- January 30, 2024 at Falls Church HS from 7:00 - 9:00 PM
- February 1, 2024 at Lewis HS from 5:00 - 7:30 PM
- February 7, 2024 at Westfield HS from 7:00 – 9:00 PM
- February 8, 2024 at South Lakes HS from 6:00 – 8:00 PM
- February 20, 2024 at Annandale HS from 3:30 - 6:30 PM

SAT, ACT and PSAT TEST PREP:

Question: Do colleges still require the SAT or ACT test as an admissions requirement?

Answer: It varies by college.

Class of 2024: While many colleges do not require the SAT or ACT as an admissions requirement, **EVERY COLLEGE HAS DIFFERENT ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS and policies regarding standardized tests.**

Classes of 2025, 2026, & 2027: Whether or not standardized tests will be required remains an open question for some colleges & universities. There are colleges that are currently test optional for the Class of 2024 but will re-evaluate their policies regarding standardized tests requirements for future graduating classes. Students will need to research this requirement during their college search process and before submitting their applications during their senior year.

Recommendation: We recommend that ALL college bound students take the SAT and/or ACT. Some colleges and scholarships require standardized test scores in the application process. Generally, students take the SAT and/or ACT for the first time in the spring of junior year. We recommend that students complete Algebra 2 prior to testing. If a student takes Algebra 2 during junior year, target the June official test date as the first test attempt. There are several ways to prepare for the SAT or ACT. For students who wish to prepare on their own, *Khan Academy* or *Kaplan Test Prep* are two great online resources.

For students who are interested in a test prep class, **Applerouth Test Prep** partners with our WPHS PTSA to offer test preparation at a discounted rate for WPHS students. They offer mock tests and group class sessions during the school year. The full schedule and registration can be found on <http://www.applerouth.com/schools/8946/>

WPHS student need-based scholarships are available. Students should see Mrs. Young in the College & Career Center or send an email to kbyoung1@fcps.edu.

Questions about Applerouth? Our WPHS PTSA Program Manager is Ms. Marilyn Aboff. She can be contacted at marilynaboff@yahoo.com .

Experienced tutors are also available for questions at 202-558-5644 or info@applerouth.com .

For students who may be interested in on-line test prep resources, below are several free on-line resources available for SAT and/or ACT preparation:

Tutor.com – Must be accessed through student’s Schoology account

<https://www.khanacademy.org/SAT>

<https://www.kaptest.com/sat/free/events>

<https://www.kaptest.com/act/free/act-free-practice-test>

SCHOLARSHIPS:

Scholarship opportunities are posted in *Naviance Student*. Students can find application instructions for all scholarships listed below by logging into: *Naviance Student>Colleges>Scholarship & Money>Scholarship List*.

Below is a list of some of the scholarships posted in *Naviance*. This site is continuously updated, and students are ENCOURAGED to review on a regular basis as deadline dates are critical.

Students are also encouraged to visit the *Student Services Course* in *Schoology*. The *College & Career Center:Scholarships & Enrichment Program Resources* folder has additional information, tips, and resources about scholarships.

- 2024 Horatio Alger Scholarship - Amount: \$25,000 - Deadline: 3/15/2024
- John Lennon Award - Amount: \$20,000 - Deadline: 2/3/2024
- William J Foreman Memorial Scholarship – Amount: \$2,000.00 - Deadline 4/12/2024
- Michell Merhige Scholarship – Amount: \$1,500.00 - Deadline 3/8/2024
- Aspiring Scholars Award - Amount: \$2,500 - Deadline: 1/31/2024
- Junior Sciences and Humanities Symposium at The Catholic University - Amount: \$1,000-\$2,000 - Deadline: 1/14/2024
- Apple Credit Union Scholarships - Amount \$3000 - Deadline: 3/15/2024

- Stand up to Distracted Driving Scholarship - Amount: \$1,000 - Deadline: 5/29/2024
- Bell Scholarship –Amount: Up to \$80,000 – Deadline: 3/2/2024
- CIEE High School abroad Scholarship –Amount: Varies – Deadline: 1/24/2024
- The Akerson Family Foundation Scholarship - Amount: Up to \$40,000 – Deadline: 3/1/2024
- Phillip Randolph scholarship - Amount: \$5,000 – Deadline: 1/31/2024
- Bull Run Civil War Round Table Scholarship - Amount: \$2,000 – Deadline: 4/3/2024
- NVADACA Scholarship - Amount: \$4000 (multiple scholarships awarded) - Deadline: 3/1/2024
- Nekkanti Accounting Scholarship - Amount: \$500 - Deadline: 3/9/2024
- Boddu Nekkanti Dance Scholarship Fund - Amount: \$500 - Deadline: 3/9/2024
- Boddu Football Scholarship - Amount: \$500 - Deadline: 3/9/2024
- Generation Hope Scholar Fund - Amount: \$1,200-\$2,400 a year - Deadline: 4/2/2024
- National Scholarship from THEDREAM.US - Amount: Up to \$33,000 a year
- Centennial Scholars Program– Amount: Full Tuition – Deadline: 2/1/2024
- Fannie Berliss Rosenbaum and Joseph Rosenbaum Scholarship – Amount: \$5000 – Deadline:2/1/2024
- Vishnu Memorial Scholarship– Amount: \$1000 – Deadline: 2/1/2024
- Bloomquist Family Scholarship – Amount: \$5000 – Deadline: 2/1/2024
- Darla C. Ellis Memorial Scholarship – Amount: \$3000 – Deadline 2/1/2024
- Crayons to Careers Scholarship –Amount: \$1000-\$2500 – Deadline 2/1/2024
- James H. Dillard II Scholarship– Amount: \$2000 – Deadline 2/1/2024
- Kendrick New Trajectory 2-4-6-8 Scholarship – Amount: \$20,000 – Deadline 2/1/2024
- Leslie Kent Memorial Scholarship - Amount: \$2500 – Deadline 2/1/2024
- The LimKim Dreamers Scholarship –Amount: \$1000 – Deadline 2/1/2024
- Michael Marshall Fund Scholarship – Amount: \$5000 – Deadline 2/1/2024
- Sharifa Alkhateeb Memorial Scholarship – Amount: \$1000 – Deadline 2/1/2024
- Leslie Kent Memorial Community College Scholarship – Amount: \$2500 – Deadline: 5/31/2024

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS:

Enrichment programs present an opportunity for students to explore their interests or learn new skills. Students can find programs and application instructions for all enrichment programs listed below by logging into: *Naviance Student>Colleges> Research Colleges>Enrichment Programs.*

Below is a list of some of the programs posted in *Naviance*. This site is continuously updated and students are ENCOURAGED to review on a regular basis as deadline dates are critical.

- Sadie TM Alexander Conference for Economics and Related Fields (SACE) - Event date: 2/15-2/17/2024
- HiStep 2.0 Summer program - Deadline: 1/12/2024 - Event date: 6/10-8/2/2024
- Stanford Clinical Summer Internship - Deadline: 2/15/2024 - Event dates: July 8-19, 2024 in person, July 22-August 2, 2024 for virtual
- Simons Stonybrook summer research program - Deadline to apply: 2/7/2024 - Event dates: 7/1-8/9/2024
- High school diplomats - Deadline to apply: 1/15/2024 - Event date: 7/19-7/28/2024
- Radio Production Summer Camp 2024 - Deadline: No hard deadline, discount if registered before 4/30/2024 - Event date: Varies, multiple dates available.
- Commonwealth Cyber Initiative (CCI) Northern Virginia Internship Program - Deadline: 1/31/2024 - Event date: 6/17-8/9/2024
- Animal Husbandry Internship - Deadline: Rolling admission - Event date: 1/2024-3/2024
- Pratt Pre-College Portfolio Development - Event date: 1/2/2024-1/5/2024
- I3 Competition - Deadline: 12/23/2023 - Event date: 1/12/2024-4/20/2024 Dates are still tentative
- Wake Forest Summer Immersion Program - Deadline: Rolling admissions until programs are filled - Event dates: Varies throughout summer
- James Madison University Summer Honors Institute - Deadline to apply: 2/29/2024 - Event dates: 7/14/2024 - 7/20/2024
- SINC Sports Conference Event date: 2/23-2/24/2024